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"Save me from my Friends!"

TO THE

REV. EDMUND POULTER.

(See his Letter below.)

SIR,

Without any waste of time or room for the sake of ceremony, I shall, at once, and following the order you have pursued, endeavour to answer every part of the letter, which you did me the honour to send me on Thursday evening last, which should, if I had had it three hours sooner, have appeared in the Register of the last week, and which I now am about to send forth to the public.

First, then, Sir, you complain of the *partiality* of the gentlemen, by whom the Report of the Proceedings was taken and published. I really did not, when I read the Report, perceive in it any marks of partiality. It appeared to me to be as nearly correct as such a report could be expected to be. You cite, however, a particular instance; and, in this you are unfortunate; for, I myself am ready to take my oath, that you, in speaking of Mr. Garnier, described him as your "near and dear *relation*." I have, since I have received your letter, put this question to six gentlemen, who were present, two of them clergymen: "*What* was it that Mr. Poulter called Mr. Garnier, when he gave his reasons for not having called me to order when I was going into that subject?" The answer of every one has been: "he called him his near and dear *relation*." Besides this, I well remember, that, while you were speaking, a gentleman upon my right hand, asked me *how* you were the *relation* of Mr. Garnier; and, while at dinner, the same day, there being none present but persons of the county, there arose a conversation upon this very question of relationship. To be at issue, thus, upon a point of fact, is not pleasant; but, it is generally true, that no one remembers so imperfectly what a speaker says, in the heat of disputation, as the speaker himself. Ask any of your friends, Sir, who were near you, in the Hall; and I am satisfied, that you will find reason to doubt your own accuracy, in this respect, at least. That you should *forget* what you said, in the haste of the moment, is not only probable, but it is what one would naturally expect; but, that you should now give us, as *the very words*; that you should now lay before the public, marked by inverted commas, words which you did not utter, does, I must confess, greatly surprize me; and my surprize is not diminished by the reflection, that it is a matter of no importance, as far as I can conceive, what the words were; for, what difference could it possibly make, as to the merits of the case before the meeting, whether Mr. Garnier was your relation, or not? What possible inducement could the reporters have to misrepresent you in a thing of this sort? Supposing their partialities to have been against you, what end could they propose to themselves in making the world believe that you were the relation, instead of the friend and admirer, of the person of whom mention had been made?

As to my being *out of order*, in introducing the subject of Mr. Garnier and his immense emoluments, that I now deny, as I denied at the time. To talk over again the demerits of the Convention appeared to me to be quite useless; but, nothing seemed more proper, in addressing one's self to a meeting of *tax-payers*, than to show the causes of the friendship and support with the Convention-makers found; and, the particular instance in question was a very striking one of the interest which some persons had, and must naturally have, in a continuation of the war, at all events, and to which continuation the Portugal Convention was so manifestly a friend. The people want to be made acquainted with *facts*. They have so long been bandied about from faction to faction, that they cannot know what to think. They cannot know their friends from their enemies. The way is to give them some facts; names and dates and sums. Fix their attention to things, and not amuse them with sounds. The corrupters and the corrupted want nothing more than to keep facts from the people. Neither faction exposes, or attempts to expose, the other, in those points where the public are really interested. They quarrel; they hate one another most sincerely; but, their hatred is that of rivals; that of rivals for

plunder; and, they take special care not to attack the object of their common pursuit. ——We were met for the purpose of considering, whether it was proper to petition the king for inquiry into the cause of a great military failure. You called me to order, because I was making a statement of the expence of supporting the Duke of York, of whose failures and of whose memorable Convention at the Helder, I had just been speaking, as of the example, which had led to all our subsequent disgraceful capitulations and conventions. And, if this was not being in order, what could be so? Was I not, when I was speaking of the *services* of a person, to speak also of the compensation, which he received for those services? Why was this, above all other matter, to be avoided? Was it because you did not wish the people to know how their money was expended? Were you afraid, Sir, that they would begin to perceive, that the sacrifices they were making were not for the defence of their country? I can see no other reason; but, if another such opportunity should occur, the cry of *order* shall not prevent me from proceeding to discharge what I deem my bounden duty.

With respect to Mr. Garnier and his patent and emoluments, I should be fully justified in refusing to admit into my Register, any answer to what I thought proper to say at a public meeting of the county. The time and place for answering me was when and where the speech was made. I am ready, however, to admit any thing respecting *this* matter, until the discussion be fairly closed, because it is a matter of deep and *general* interest; but, I must, before I proceed further, beg you to observe, that it is upon this account that I admit your letter, and not from any persuasion, that I am bound to give an opponent at Winchester an opportunity of reviving the debate in my Register, which is intended for general circulation; for, otherwise, every one who had a dispute with me, no matter of what kind, might claim the insertion of his letters, and the public, as far as they read my publication, would be entertained with, at best, the mere politics of Hampshire.

Mr. Garnier's is a case of great and general importance. I am happy, that he has, through you, challenged this sort of discussion; not, because I am convinced, that he will have cause to repent of having yielded to the suggestions of zealous, though injudicious, friendship; but, because I regard his patent, and the concern growing out of it, as being amongst those flagrant abuses, the exposure of which must, in time, work a change in the minds of this deceived and torpid nation.

You tell me, Sir, that Mr. Garnier "loaths and abhors the very *name* and "*nature* of war;" and this, "from his "general feelings of humanity, and from his "having lost *four sons* in the service of his "country by the war; and that most happily would he restore the money he has "gained by the patent, if the blood he has "lost could be restored to him." Now, Sir, this is very full of fine sentiment, and might do very well in a modern romance. But, how far will it stand the test of reason? *Why* did he place four sons in the army, or navy, if he loathed and abhorred the very name and nature of war? He, surely, intended they should, sometime or other, go forth to fight? Or, if he made them soldiers, or sailors, upon the speculation of continual peace, I see, in his conduct, nothing better than the proof of a desire to obtain for them a livelihood out of the public burthens without any corresponding services. This is a dilemma, Sir, from which, I am of opinion, you will find it very difficult to extricate Mr. Garnier. It is in vain, that you apply a general argument in support of a statement from personal knowledge; it is in vain, that you tell me, that "his *liberal* "*education*, *generous* habits, and pa-"rental feelings, would prevent him from "bartering affections for interests;" for I shall be satisfied with nothing but conclusions, drawn from *facts*. Look, Sir, into the list of places and pensions; and there you will find proofs of greediness and meanness too hateful to be described, in persons, who have had, what you are pleased, in the common phrase of the day, to call a "liberal education." Indeed, it would seem, that, in many instances, such education, instead of having produced dignified notions; instead of having given rise to independence of mind and of conduct, is looked upon as a sufficient plea for saddling the possessor as a sort of state pauper upon the public. This education, call it what you will, has a degrading effect. I have never yet seen it productive of any thing great or praiseworthy. I see it sending forth a train of shameless drones and peculators; and, therefore, I despise it. Of Mr. Garnier's *generosity* we shall, presently, see some *instances* not to be controverted; but, give me leave to make a general observation; and that is, that, according to the old maxim, we should be *just* before we are *generous*. The Apostle, you well know, Sir, bids us *give* to those who need, a precept which he had copied from his Master; but, he says

something, too, about the manner of *getting* what we give; and he tells us, to be sure to get it by our labour; to earn it; to be able to call it our *own*, in conscience as well as in law, before we attempt to give it away. Whether Mr. Garnier's generosity will stand this test we are now proceeding to inquire.

The date and the duration of Mr. Garnier's patent you have accurately stated. It has been in the hands of his father and himself for *seventy-four years*; during that time they have had, in virtue of their patent, a *monopoly* of the supply of the army with *medicines* and *surgical instruments*. Mr. Garnier himself has never, in any instance, performed any part of the duty; and yet, besides the immense profits derived from the monopoly, he, who never has done an hour's duty, who has been proved upon oath never to have given a moment's attendance, in any way whatever in the public service, has been in the receipt, and is now in the receipt, of the pay of *ten shillings a day*, as being upon *the staff of the army*, though he "loaths "and abhors the very name and nature of "war!" Sir, fine sentiments will not silence this fact. Talk to me not of the natural effect of a "*liberal* education;" talk to me not of Mr. Garnier's "*generosity*;" for, if ever there was a proof of consummate *meanness*, it is that which we here have before us. Good God! Look at the estates in and about Wickham; look at the endless church preferment of his sons; look at his splendid mansion and equipage, and his numerous train of menials. Look at all this; consider that it has all come from the public burthens and without one day's service on the part of the possessor; consider that this possessor still receives, in pay from that public, the sum of ten shillings a day, as an officer upon the staff of the army, in which office he has never acted for one hour; and then insult us, who are the payers of this man; then insult us again, I say, with an argument, in favour of his disinterestedness, founded on his "*liberal* education" and his "*generous* habits!"

I should now enter upon a refutation of the statement, which you have made with respect to the *profits* of Mr. Garnier. But, Sir, you are not to learn, that, early in the present year, a Report, relative to his department, was laid before parliament by the Commissioners of Military Inquiry, which Report, as far as it relates to the said profits, I shall, before I proceed further with my own observations, quote, word for word. The Commissioners first observe, that there is no *efficient* check to Mr. Garnier's Accounts, either as to *quantity*, *quality*, or *prices*. All that you have alledged about *long credit*, the Apothecaries Company's *prices to the Navy*, and so forth, was alleged before the commissioners; and, in this extract from their Report, you will find it all completely refuted.——"Before we proceed to state the course we have followed "in endeavouring to get at a correct "judgment of the prices allowed in "these bills, it may be proper to notice, "that the form of the certificate, at present signed by the physician and surgeon general, differs from that which "was in use when Sir Clifton Wintringham "was physician general to the army. His "certificate states, "that the medicines "" and materials, as recited in the invoices, "" had, agreeable to their respective dates, "" been carefully viewed and examined "" by him, and that they were found to "" be very good; and further, that he "" believes the prices, as far as his inquiries could ascertain, were reasonable, "" as being rated at the current price "" which they bore at the time they were "" supplied by the apothecary general." "From this form of certificate we infer, "that the very articles named in the invoices "had been examined by the physician general on the dates of their being placed "in the packages; and that the current "rate of price on the days of the supply "was that which was certified by him.—— "The present form of the certificate states, "that the physican general and surgeon general "have, *from time to time*, carefully examined the different articles "" contained in the account, and that "" they have uniformly found them of the "" best quality." Whatever inference "may be drawn from the words used in "this certificate, we learn from Mr. Clarke, "that there is *no security but the* "*integrity of the parties employed*," that "the articles which have been inspected "are the articles which had been issued "from the elaboratory.——The present "certificate further states, that "having "" examined the prices charged, and having taken into consideration the directions received from the treasury, that "" they were to pay attention to the delay in the payment, they are of opinion, that the apothecary general's "" charges to the public are fair and reasonable." This part of the present "certificate does not, like the former certificate, afford a ground for inferring that "the prices which are certified are at the "current rate of the days of supply; but "the physician general says, "that in

" " checking the apothecary general's " " charges, he always takes into consi- " " deration the variation in the prices of " " the medicines." On an inspection, " however, of the two accounts which we " have procured from the treasury, one of " which amounts to about forty-four thou- " sand five hundred pounds, and the other " to upwards of seventy-five thousand " pounds, we cannot find, except in one or " two instances, that there is any variation " in the prices charged in each year; not- " withstanding the supply is extended " through the whole of the year; and " we have understood that, in one material " article at least, that of bark, there was " a very great variation in its price during " one of the years.——We have remarked " too, on an investigation of those bills, " that the prices charged by the apothecary " general have been *uniformly admitted*; " for we can find no alteration or deduction " in any one of the charges. Yet this al- " lowance for the delay in payment is not " added by the physician and surgeon ge- " neral at the end of the account as a per- " centage for a certain specified period on " the sum total of it, but *forms part of* " *the charges* on some or all of the items; " and must be considered, therefore, as " being left to the *discretion of the apothe-* " *cary general.*——It is obvious how diffi- " cult it must be to check such charges, by " comparing them with the charges made " by others in the trade. But, conceiving " that the most satisfactory mode of doing " it would be to compare the total amount " charged by the apothecary general for " certain invoices of medicines furnished " to the army, with the total amount " which others would have charged for " the same under similar circumstances, " we submitted particular invoices of me- " dicines, furnished by the apothecary ge- " neral in the years 1804 and 1805, but " without his prices affixed, to the con- " sideration of two or three eminent drug- " gists and chemists, and we desired them " to affix the prices which the best articles " of the kind bore in those years. And, " for a future comparison, we procured " from the ordnance and transport boards " the bills for medicines supplied for their " use during the years 1804 and 1805; the " first of these boards being supplied by " a druggist, and the other by the apothe- " caries company.——The blank invoice " which we submitted to Messrs. Kempson " and Co. druggists in London, was, for " a regimental chest of medicines furnished " by the apothecary general in 1805, the " bill for which was communicated to us " by Mr. Calvert Clarke. It will be seen, " on an inspection of the two columns in " which the different rates of charge of " the apothecary general and of Messrs. " Kempson and Co. are given, that the " rates of the first are almost in every " instance higher than those of Messrs. " Kempson, and, on the amount of the " whole, *are* 40 *per-cent. higher than* " *theirs:* yet Mr. Kempson says, that " " his prices would have afforded him " " *something handsome in the way of pro-* " " *fit*; and that the price of bark, " " particularly, is taken at a high valu- " " ation."——The blank bills submitted " to Messrs. Godfrey and Cooke, and to " Messrs. Corbyn and Co., also chemists " and druggists in London, were copied " from invoices of much larger quantities " than that submitted to Mr. Kempson, " and were selected from the apothecary " general's bills for 1804 and 1805. On " an inspection of the comparative state- " ment in the Appendix, of the rates of " the charge of the apothecary general, " and of the gentlemen before named, it " appears that there is often a difference in " the prices of these gentlemen as between " themselves, and that, in some instances, " their prices exceed those of the apothe- " cary general; but that, on the whole, " his prices *exceed those of Messrs. Godfrey* " *and Cooke by* 41 *per-cent.* and of Messrs. " Corbyn and Co. *by* 18 *per-cent* in the " year 1804; and in 1805 they *exceed the* " *first by* 37, *and the second by* 19 *per-cent.* " Some explanation, however, is neces- " sary in this place: it is well known that " the prices which merchants and tradesmen " charge for the articles they furnish are, " in a great measure, regulated by the " quantity furnished, by the credit which " is given, and by the risk of payment; " and, without a consideration of these " circumstances, no comparison can be " justly made. In the present case, we " learn from Mr. Cooke, the partner of " Mr. Godfrey, that his prices are fixed " on the principle of his customer being a " merchant buying largely, and at six " months credit: " was the credit," he " says, " to be extended to 12 months in " " addition (or 18 months altogether) he " " would have added about 10 per-cent. " " to his prices." In comparing, there- " fore, Messrs. Godfrey and Cooke's prices " with the apothecary general's, £10 per- " cent. ought to be added to the former; " for the apothecary general's bills were " seldom paid sooner than eighteen months,

" and sometimes not until two years after " the supply was made. With respect to " Messrs. Corbyn and Co.'s prices, it is to " be understood that, in fixing them, they " have proceeded on the principle of the " articles being furnished to apothecaries, " to whom they give twelve months credit: " but they look on the risk, it seems, in " this case, to be considerable, and they " have taken it accordingly into their valu- " ation. They have also calculated their " prices on the small quantities of me- " dicines usually furnished to apothecaries; " but if such large quantities were furnish- " ed, as were described to be furnished in " a year by the apothecary general, Mr. Mes- " ser (of Messrs. Corbyn's house) thought " that Messrs. Corbyn's prices should be " reduced 10 per cent. on drugs, and 20 " per cent. on chemical preparations; and, " were the payment delayed for eighteen " months, or two years, Mr. Messer says, " taking into consideration the quantity of " the supply, with *certainty* of payment, " that he still thinks the prices which his " house had affixed to the bills *ought to sa- " tisfy any person.* On the whole, there- " fore, we may consider that the prices of " Messrs. Godfrey and Cooke, and of " Messrs. Corbyn and Co. under the circum- " cumstances of a wholesale supply, and " 18 months credit, without risk, would " not have materially differed from each " other. But these are the circumstances " under which the apothecary general has " furnished medicines, &c. to the army, " and these prices *are about one fifth higher " than those which we have last considered.* " —We observe, on an inspection of the " medicine bills of the ordnance and trans- " port boards, for the years 1804 and 1805, " that the prices of some of the more valu- " able articles, unlike what we had observ- " ed in the apothecary general's bills, vary " frequently in the course of the same year. " This circumstance, at the same time that " it proved the inefficiency of the check on " his prices, made it difficult for us to com- " pare them with those charges to the two " boards. We have extracted the prices, " however, of some of the articles most " commonly in use, from his bill for the " month of July, in the year 1805, and the " prices for the same kind of articles charg " ed to the ordnance board by Messrs. Bush " and Howard, and to the transport board " by the apothecaries company in the same " year and month, and we have arranged " them in separate columns. This arrange- " ment shews, that the prices of the apo- " thecary general do not much exceed those " of the apothecaries company; but that " *they exceed those of Messrs. Bush and " Howard nearly sixty per cent.* It must " not be overlooked, however, that the " bills of the apothecaries company are de- " livered in quarterly to the transport board, " and, after having been examined, are " paid by 90 days bills, but without interest. " Such a difference in the time of payment " may sufficiently account, perhaps, for " the apothecary general's excess of charge " beyond the apothecaries company. The " ordnance medicine bills are also made out " quarterly, and, after being certified by " the surgeon general belonging to that de- " partment, are sent to the surveyor gene- " ral's office, and are discharged in course. " In this case too, therefore, an addition " ought to be made to the prices, in order " to make a correct comparison between " them and those of the apothecary gene- " ral; but this addition must be much less " than sixty per cent.—The result of this " course of inquiry would shew, if the " prices of the apothecaries company are to " be the criterion by which to examine the " apothecary general's bills, that the prices " which have been allowed him are not very " improper. But *ought these prices alone " to have guided those whose duty it has " been to examine his accounts?*—Had the " prices of the most eminent of the trade " been also resorted to, for the purpose of " checking the account, it would have ap- " peared that, even taking into considera- " tion the delay of payment, the prices of " the apothecary general have exceeded, " BY ONE-FIFTH AT LEAST, what " should have been allowed him.—We have " already noticed that the subject of the " supply of surgical instruments for the " use of the army, by the apothecary gene- " ral, had heretofore been under the con- " sideration of the lords of the treasury, " and that their lordships were pleased to " approve of his continuing to supply these " articles.—In Mr. Garnier's representation " to their lordships, after stating the " grounds on which he claimed the right, " under his patent, to supply surgical in- " struments (which we have before alluded " to), he insists further, " that he has an " " equal right to be paid for them in the " " same manner as his predecessors have " " been paid, that is, by charging the in- " " struments to government at a fair pro- " " fit, as between tradesman and con- " " sumer, and not by a nett commission " " on the first cost of the commodity," " which it appears, it had been proposed to " allow him, to the extent of 10 per cent.

" Mr. Garnier added, " that such a plan, " " if adopted, would have been attended " " with considerable loss to government ; " " for that then the instruments must have " " been bought on the same credit as go- " " vernment took of him, and that Savig- " " ny and Evans were the only two per- " " sons in the trade competent to give " " credit ; and he alledges that these per- " " sons' charge to him on an annual credit, " " would have exceeded, by 10 per cent. " " what Mr. Garnier charged, which, ad- " " ded to the proposed commission, would " " have made a real loss to government of " " 20 per cent." Mr. Garnier subjoined " a statement of what he then (1797) " charged for each set of instruments cal- " led capitals, and what would have been " the charge if the plan had been adopted. " In this he states, that his charge was " £17 17s per set ; but that, if bought on " an annual credit, the charge to him would " be £19 9s to which adding 10 per cent. " commission, the whole price would be " £21 8s, or a loss to government of " £3 11s, (i. e.) 20 per cent.—It is mani- " fest, on a view of this statement, that it " cannot be correct ; for it assumes the " point in question, and proceeds on the " supposition that the instruments could not " have been procured by Mr. Garnier at " less than 10 per cent. above the price " which, even under the circumstance of " the long delay in payment, was charged " by him to government. That which we " are about to state will shew that he was " altogether mistaken in his representation " on this point. For we have examined " Mr. Evans, one of the tradesmen to whom " Mr. Garnier alludes, on the subject. We " selected Mr. Evans, because it appeared " that his house has furnished surgical in- " struments to the navy hospitals, under " the orders of the transport board, for a " considerable number of years. We have " confined our inquiries relative to Mr. " Evans's prices to the period subsequent to " 1802, because, by a prior regulation, the " instruments which are to constitute what " are called full sets of capitals, and port- " able sets of capitals, are particularly enu- " merated ; and therefore, when Mr. Evans " speaks of these different collections, it is " evident that he speaks of the same as are " charged in the apothecary general's bills " by those names. In these bills for the " years 1804 and 1805, we find that the " charge for full sets is always *nineteen* " *pounds nineteen shillings* each, and *thir-* " *teen pounds five shillings* for each set of " portables. During this period, Mr. " Evans has charged *sixteen pounds sixteen* " *shillings* for the first, and *nine pounds* " *nine shillings* for the second, including in " both the price of the cases. These are " Mr. Evans's prices, however, when these " articles were sold on the usual credit ; " and therefore it may be remarked, that " they can be no fit criterion by which to " judge of the apothecary general's prices, " for that he was seldom paid under eighteen " months, and sometimes not until two " years after the supply. To meet this ob- " jection, Mr. Evans was asked, what " would have been his prices under such a " circumstance ? But adding to the question " at the same time (what was the fact in " respect of the apothecary general), that " the supply of surgical instruments in each " year had amounted, on an average, to " seven thousand pounds, with no ultimate " risk of payment. His answer shews, " that under all these circumstances, he " would not only not have added to the prices " before named by him, but that he would " have deducted from the total amount " " certainly not less than 5 per-cent." " This, therefore, ought to have been the " principle on which the apothecary general " should have made his charges ; for it is " the rule of charging between the trades- " man and the consumer, for which he con- " tends. His charge, however, for a full " set of capitals, is about 19 *per-cent. above* " *Mr. Evans's*, and 40 *per-cent. above Mr.* " *Evans's charge for a set of portables* : and " these prices have been allowed (as it " should seem without inquiry) by those " whose duty it was to check the charge.— " We have learned another fact from Mr. " Evans deserving of attention, also, on a " view of the prices which have been char- " ged, and allowed, in the apothecary ge- " neral's bills. The screw tourniquets, " for which the apothecary general always " charges *twelve shillings and sixpence each*, " are sold singly by Mr. Evans at *ten shil-* " *lings and sixpence*, and under a sort of " contract with the transport board, are " supplied by him to the navy at *eight shil-* " *lings each* ; being an addition to Mr. " Evans's prices of *above 50 per-cent.* by " the apothecary general, as a compensation " for an extension of credit of 15 or 18 " months.—The evidence which we have " thus produced shews, we think, a very " blameable inattention in checking the apo- " thecary general's charges in respect of " surgical instruments ; for the slightest in- " quiries would have enabled those to " whose consideration the prices were re- " ferred, to have ascertained that the char-

" ges were extravagant.—The total charge " for instruments from the beginning of " 1796 to the end of 1805, or for 11 years, " amounts to £72,919. 4s. 8d. or nearly " £7000 per annum on an average. When " it is known that the regimental surgeons " have always found their own instruments, " the propriety of directing so large an ad- " ditional supply for the use of the army " may well be questioned. The statement, " which we shall give hereafter, of the quan- " tity now in store, will evince, we think, " that there has been a very great disregard " to the public interest in making such a " provision.—The apothecary general's bills " for 1804 and 1805 include large charges " for sugar, pearl barley, oatmeal, paper, " sheets, bottles. packing-cases, &c, Ma- " ny of these articles are not usually pro- " vided by apothecaries, and therefore it " may be imagined, that neither the phy- " sician general nor surgeon general can be " very competent to judge of the propriety " of the prices charged for them. Had they " inquired, however, into the matter, " they would have found, perhaps as we " have found, that even admitting an extra " charge on account of the delay of pay- " ment, the prices charged are improperly " great.—We have come to this conclusion " from an examination of Messrs. Trotters' " charges for similar articles supplied to " general hospitals, also, in those years, " and from the returns made by Messrs. " Curtis and Clarke, corn-factors, and " Messrs. Harrisons, bottle-merchants, of " the prices which similar articles in their " different trades bore during the same " period. It must be observed, that in " Messrs. Trotters' course of dealings with " government they have been used, at " least during 1804, calculating on a " year's credit to government, to charge " about 20 per cent. on the money price of " the articles furnished by them; yet their " charge for hospital sheets is *seven shillings* " *and four pence*, at the time that the apo- " thecary general's charge is *ten shillings*; " and, when the apothecary general charges " *eleven pence per pound* for Muscovado su- " gar, Messrs. Trotters' charge only *eight* " *pence per pound*: their charge for corks " is *two shillings and four pence per gross*; " the apothecary general's *six shillings*; he " charges for bottles at the rate of 60 *shillings* " *per gross for quarts, and 56 shillings per gross* " *for pints*. at the time when, we learn from " Messrs. Harrisons, the first were sold by " them at 40 *shillings per gross, and the* " *second for 36 shillings per gross* on a cre- " dit of six months, and with a discount, " for money, of one shilling and sixpence " per gross; and these prices we understand " to have been the current prices of the " trade for the last four years. The market " price for oatmeal in 1804, as is to be seen " in the returns, fluctuated between 17 and " 23 shillings, and averaged during the 12 " months *nineteen shillings*; and for Scotch " barley, between fourteen and *twenty-two* " *shillings*, and averaged during the same " period eighteen shillings; yet the first ar- " ticle is charged by the apothecary general, " throughout the year, at *twenty-six shil-* " *lings* per cwt. and the second at *twenty-* " *seven shillings* per cwt. The total of the " charges for this description of articles " makes comparatively but a small part, " certainly, of the certified amount of the " apothecary general's bills; yet it con- " firms our opinion of the inefficiency of " the check on his charges, and of the great " loss which the public has sustained from a " loose observance of the order of the " treasury directing the physician general " and surgeon general, in considering the " justness of his prices, to pay attention " to the delay of payment to him."

Now, Sir, unless this Report of the Commissioners is *false*; unless they, or the persons they examined, have *lied*, what you assert, respecting the amount of Mr. Garnier's gains, is not true, but, on the contrary, is greatly and manifestly wide of the truth.——I stated Mr. Garnier to pocket of the public money 12,000 and some odd pounds a year. This I took from his own amount of *profits* for the last three years. You deny that this is a fair way of calculating; and, you assert, that the *average* of his gains is not nearly so great. If, by an average, you mean the average upon all the 74 years that the patent and monopoly have been in the family, your assertion is, doubtless, true; because when the patent was first granted, the army did not, in all probability, amount, upon a run of years, to *thirty* thousand men, instead of *three hundred thousand* men, as it now does. But, you well know, that I could have no such average in contemplation; you must know, that what I meant to state, and what I did state, was the sum he *now* receives and clears annually; and, in making this statement, how could I act fairer, than to take the average of the three last year, all the years of which I, or the parliament, possessed an authentic and acknowledged amount of profits?

You tell me, Sir, that Mr. Garnier is to be looked upon merely as a *merchant*; as a wholesale *dealer*. You make him cast

his skin, as a "gentleman of *liberal edu-* "*cation* and *generous* habits," and place him before me as a mere trader; a mere wholesale apothecary; a worker of the pestle and mortar; a downright tradesman nd shop-keeper.

"Boastful and high, your first's a country 'Squire;
"Your next's a tradesman, meek and much a liar."

I do not impute the latter quality to Mr. Garnier; but, I think, it will appear to the reader, that the Commissioners do really charge him with having, for his own interest sake, stated, in a most formal manner, *what was not true.* But, Sir, making Mr. Garnier a tradesman will not answer your purpose, unless you could show, that he had no *monopoly*; unless you could show, that he ran a fair race with other tradesmen; unless you could remove the fact, *proved* before the Commissioners, that he sold his goods to the public at a much higher price than those goods might have been supplied from other tradesmen's shops.

I stated that Mr. Garnier *pocketed £12,000 a year of the public money, without rendering any services whatever in return.* This is my statement. You call these £12,000 *profits*; and tell me, that I may as well charge *any merchant* with pocketing the public money to the amount of the annual profits of his concerns; the fallacy of which, the miserable sophistry of which, we shall see in a moment.——In the first place, the merchant, properly so called (and when *properly* so called no character is more respectable;) the merchant has no monopoly; there are no part of the public fools enough to have entered into a bond to deal with nobody but him for merchandize. The merchant has to look for customers; he has a *competition* to contend with; and, there is, all through, a *rigorous inquiry* into the quantity and quality of his goods. All these circumstances are wanting to make the case of Mr. Garnier like that of the merchant.

Now, then, as to the sum which Mr. Garnier annually *pockets*, without any services rendered to the suffering public in return. And here, Sir, we will take the average of the last 13 years: his average charge against the public has been £67,340. Upon which the commissioners state, that he has charged *one-fifth* of the gross amount more than other tradesmen, in the same line, would, under circumstances exactly similar, have charged the public. Consequently he has received all the *profits* that he ought, as a tradesman, to have had; and has, *besides those profits*, received this one-fifth clear into his pocket. Now, divide 67,340 by 5, and you will see, that, over and above his profits as a tradesman, supplying so *sure* a customer, he has, of the public money, for the last thirteen years, pocketted 13,468 pounds a year, for which he has never rendered the public any service, in any way whatever. Either, Sir, this statement is true, or the Report, signed by the seven Commissioners, and laid before parliament, is false. Yet, Sir, he, notwithstanding his "*liberal education* and *generous* habits," condescends to receive, besides this immense sum, ten shillings a day, *as an officer upon the staff of the army*; yes, as a *staff officer*, though you yourself declare him to be *purely a gentleman*, and quite *incapable* of any official attendance of any sort.

Sir, you would fain have it believed, that Mr. Garnier cares little about the preservation of his patent. If this were the case, and if his profits were no greater than what they ought to be, would he not have resigned the patent long ago, and, if he had chosen to continue in the trade, have met the competition of other tradesmen? But, Sir, not only is the presumptive evidence against this assertion of Mr. Garnier's disinterestedness, we have positive proof of his rigid adherence to the *privileges* granted in his patent. In the year 1797, at the end of 63 years enjoyment of this lucrative monopoly, it was proposed, or hinted at, that the supply of *surgical instruments* had better be taken out of his hands; whereupon he wrote a letter, asserting his *privilege* to the exclusive supply of those instruments; stating certain facts as to the comparative cheapness of his articles, *which statement the Commissioners have proved to be untrue*; and, concluding his letter, with saying, that he "*humbly hopes* that he shall be permitted *still to supply the said articles.*" Does this, Sir, discover a *carelessness* about the gains arising from the patent? The agent, Clarke, swore, that Mr. Garnier *never* meddled with any part of the business; but, you see, he could meddle, when the object was to preserve a small part of the monopoly that appeared to be in danger. Is this the mark of "a *libe-* "*ral education* and of *generous* habits?"

It is stated in your letter, Sir, that *one half* of the gains are given up, by Mr. Garnier, to his *agents.* But, what is that to the public? The reason for this participation is manifest enough. "*Snacks*" is the old word; without snacks, in such a case, Mr. Garnier could not *possibly* carry the thing on; is it not upon this principle of snacks that all the extortions on the public are practised; and, without snacks, would the pub-

lic treasure be, in any case, wasted as it is, and the taxes increased to the present insupportable weight?

In a letter, from you, Sir, I should not have expected the assertion, that any thing granted by patent was *as sacred as a man's freehold estate*, much less should I have expected to see you apply this similitude to the grant in question, the very nature of which has been changed by the lapse of time and the change of circumstances. The grant to Mr. Garnier was made in the year 1747. It is notorious, that, at that time, it could not be in the contemplation of any one, that the army would, even in time of ordinary war, exceed *forty thousand* men. Time and circumstances have quite changed the effect of the grant, and, would not any man, who had imbibed high and generous feelings from a "*liberal education*," have been contented with the grant as it was at first intended? Instead of which, Mr. Garnier has not only grasped at the whole of the profits arising from this change, but has also procured himself to be placed as an officer upon the staff of the army, at the pay of ten shillings a day. Freehold estate, indeed! Oh what a proof of the humbled, the debased state, of this once-high-spirited nation! From no other idea than from that of the people being lost to all sense of injury and of insult could such an assertion have been made. Suppose the king were advised to grant, by way of patent, pensions to the amount of all the taxes now raised, and of that of all the incomes of all the people in the country, those of the patentees excepted. Would you still assert that these patents were as sacred as the deeds of freehold estates? Would you still say, that the nation would be bound by such patents, and that to object to the continuance of such abominable extortion, would be to discover a spirit hostile to the constitution of England? Sir, this nation has so long tamely submitted to insult from those who wallow in luxury upon the fruit of its labour, that I shall not say, that any thing will rouze it to a proper expression of its indignation; but, if any thing can so rouze it; if it be not doomed to the vilest slavery that ever disgraced mankind, language and sentiments such as you, upon this occasion, have made use of, must have that desirable effect.

You, by way of a closing argument, infer, that because "*His Majesty's present* "*ministers*," whom you fail not to compliment, as being very attentive to the public interest; that, because *they* have, notwithstanding the exposure made by the Commissioners, determined to permit (as *you* inform me) Mr. Garnier to go on in his old way; hence you infer, and appear to suppose that I shall agree, that the army could not be supplied upon better terms. Why, Sir, the same argument would apply to the *ten shillings* a day to Mr. Garnier, as an officer upon the staff of the army; it would apply to the question of surgical instruments, in which the Commisioners have proved, that the then ministry (the Pitts and the Roses and the Longs) were grossly negligent of their duty; it would apply to all possible cases; it would apply to the question of inquiry into the conduct of the Convention-making generals; it is, in short, saying to the people: "the *ministers* think "the thing right, and, therefore, right it "must be." But, Sir, I can suggest motives, other than that of the public good, which might lead to this decision of the ministry in favour of Mr. Garnier. No small part of the ministry *are themselves patent placemen*; and those who are not so themselves have children, or other relations, who are. To have trenched upon Mr. Garnier's patent; to have bound him down to fair profits, might have led to an inquiry into the origin of theirs, and into the amount of the fees, or other emoluments, attached to them. Mr. Garnier can plead no previous services, rendered either by himself or his father, as the foundation of his grant; nor can any of the ministry, for any of the patents, which they and their relations hold. This, Sir, appears to me to be a much better reason for the indulgence they have shown towards their brother patentee, than the one which you have given, and which you really appear to have expected to prove satisfactory to my readers.

I think I have now, Sir, made good my statement, and have even shown, that that statement was far within bounds, instead of being, as you describe it, a gross exaggeration. A similar fate attends the indiscreet friends of the DUKE OF YORK, whom I shall prove to be in the receipt of a *greater* income, arising from the taxes, than was stated by me at the Winchester meeting. Those indiscreet friends have affected to impute *ignorance* to me; but, I shall *prove* upon them, ignorance or falsehood as gross as ever yet made its way into print.

Of much greater importance to us is this subject of a waste of the means of the nation, than are all the politics and wars of the continent of Europe, or of the whole foreign world; for, what is it to us, who gains or who loses, who is set up or who pulled down in Spain or elsewhere, if we are to be slaves; and, it must be evident to

any man of common discernment, that men who have nothing to call their *own*, are, in fact (whatever they may be called) slaves. In the East Indies, the cultivators of the land have all the produce taken from them, except just enough to keep them from actually perishing. When the harvest approaches to ripeness, troops are set round the fields to prevent the husbandman from *smuggling* away any part of the fruit of his labour. *All* is seized on by the accursed Aumils, or *renters of taxes*; and a miserable pittance handed back to the cultivator for his bare subsistence. This is slavery the most abject; ten thousand times worse than that experienced in Algiers. To this pitch *we*, thank God, are not come; and, it is our duty, a duty we owe to the memory of our fathers, as well as to ourselves and our children, to take care that to this pitch we do not come. In all our thoughts and deliberations, this ought to be the first object. When, as in *the approaching election for this county*, we have an opportunity of choosing a person to defend our rights, we should first of all consider, whether he be, or will be, a watchful and faithful guardian of the fruits of our labour; or, whether he be a man likely to avail himself of his power, not to defend us, but to enrich himself at our expence. No matter what *party* he belongs to, or has belonged to. This is a question beneath our notice. We must resolve to break through these trammels, or we shall continue to be the sport of designing knaves, who have so long succeeded in persuading the people, that to be *consistent* they must continue their support of whatever *man* they have once been led to support, though all the circumstances may have changed, and though that same man may have falsified all his professions and promises. The occurrences at the last meeting gave me a proof, that the spirit of the country is *dormant*, but not *dead*; and, though I know well how mighty corrupt influence is, in this county in particular, I am persuaded, that, in spite of the whole power of that influence, any gentleman of known fortune, of known good moral character, would succeed to the vacant seat, if he came unpropped and unpolluted by party, and stood upon the firm ground of the Constitution. For such a man, every man, whose vote was worth having, would vote; and, that freeholder, who would vote for *any other sort of candidate*, must be either destitute of sense or of principle.——I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 16th Nov. 1808.

N. B. It has been suggested to me, that, if MAJOR HOGAN would advertise the *Numbers* of the four Bank notes, they could be easily traced to their late possessors; and, as his not having done this, is, by many intelligent and respectable persons, regarded as just ground of doubt with respect to the truth of the history connected with those notes, I confess, that I should be much pleased to see it done.

MR. POULTER'S LETTER.

Meonstoke, Nov. 10, 1808.

SIR,—My immediate view in thus addressing you is, through your favour and candour, to correct some of the errors respecting my part in the late Hampshire County Meeting, which have been copied in your journal, as well as in most of the newspapers, from the report taken by others, of whose partiality I shall hereafter speak.—First, with regard to what I said of Mr. Garnier, whom I am erroneously stated to have termed, my *relation*, I desire to repeat my words which were these, "I refrained from speaking to order before, "because it concerned the case of a person, with whom if I may not call myself "connected, yet to whom I feel myself so "strongly attached that I might appear, as "I am, partial to a character which however I admire, I leave to speak for itself "*to all who know him.*"—I have to add, in answer to your subsequent journal, that I am now desirous of speaking for him, *to all who know him not*; to which latter description I think you belong. You therein state your object at the meeting to have been, to give his friends an opportunity to answer you—a fair object I admit, and give you credit for its being so intended by you; but contend that it was wholly unattainable in the manner proposed, because no such opportunity was thereby given; for all discussion of the case was so absolutely inadmissible, that had I, or any other person, as well inclined and better enabled to do it justice, attempted it, his discussion of it must have been prevented in the same way, and for the same reason, that your introduction of it was interrupted, as being entirely out of order; and herein I complain of your introducing a case, in the nature of a charge, at a place and time where and when it could not be discussed in defence; thereby leaving a reflection, which, however false, could not be then removed. Since your journal does now afford that opportunity of answer, which your speech, however so intended by you, did not, I trust you are now as ready to give it by your *insertion* as I am to take it by my *sug-*

gestion of the following answer.—Though your subsequent information, and admission, in part anticipates my objections to your previous reflections, yet your continued arguments and assertions, and still more the public impression, which being once made by you requires being removed by me, make me persist in this necessary communication to you and them.—If, as you argue, Mr. Garnier's situation has a natural tendency to his general dependence and to his particular attachment to war, he has the more extraordinary merit for being, as you partly admit, and as he wholly is, in effect, free from both those natural failings, for which you allow he has sufficient cause, and therefore excuse; of which, however, he need not avail himself, for it is notorious to those who know him, that of all men you could have singled out, he is the most sore and tender on the subject of war; the very name and nature of which he loaths and abhors, both from his general feelings of humanity, and his particular sufferances of calamity under it. For you and the public are to learn, that in all honourable and sensible estimation of loss and gain, such as would never be denied to any indifferent person, much less to him, he is on a balance of feeling and fortune an infinitely greater loser than gainer by the war, which neither you nor they will be surprised to hear when I inform you, that *he has lost four sons, in the service of his country by the war,* and most happily would he repay the money he has gained, could you restore the blood he has lost; for of all men, he is the last, who from his liberal education, generous habits, and parental feelings, would barter affections for interests. These may be called my speculative inferences from his supposed feelings, though even in that view I cannot think them overstrained; but the facts themselves confirm my suppositions, for in the first place, so far is he from being actually a particular approver of the war, or even a general supporter of government, that nothing has ever induced him, or if I can judge from what he has said or done on that subject, ever will induce him, to support the war by any thought, word, or deed. In the next place, so far is he from having been an uniform supporter of government, as you suppose, that he has frequently been in opposition to it. As a common case in point, which is better than any other single instance I could give, I adduce, his long and constant support of Mr. Jervoise during his continued opposition to several different administrations;—so much for Mr. G's. actual independence of conduct.

In proof of his virtual independence of situation, I produce the following statement of his case.—Mr. Garnier's Patent Place, of apothecary general to the army, was granted to him in reversion, during the life of his father, who had a former grant, dated March 1735; Mr. Garnier's patent bears date the 19th of January 1747, the year in which he was at Eton School, from whence he proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge. It therefore appears that this patent has been in the family 74 years, during which time, the business has been transacted by deputy.—There is no salary annexed to the office, but the patent officer is considered as belonging to the staff of the army, and receives ten shillings a day.—No other profit or perquisite is derived from the public treasury.—Mr. Garnier's emoluments arise wholly from the contingent profits to which any commercial man is entitled who trades with a large capital.—It is necessary to undeceive you and the public, by stating, Mr. Garnier does not receive twelve thousand a year, out of the public money: give me leave therefore to explain his particular situation, from which, I am persuaded, you will agree with me, in thinking, he is not *overpaid*, for the great risk, and responsibility, which has frequently been to the amount of £150,000 a year. Mr. G. is, by his patent, to furnish the whole British army with drugs and medical stores; and must always be prepared to meet the demands of an immense army, at any moment; he is bound to keep a great stock of articles solely for the service of the army.—Mr. Garnier's profits and perquisites, you state to amount to £12,000 a year; this estimate you have taken from the profits of the three last years only, and I conceive, you give a false impression of the place, when you assert the apothecary general receives that sum annually; whereas the general average would not amount to one-fourth of that sum.—Mr. Garnier, who is incapable of managing any part of this great concern, employs agents to carry on the medical trade; and the better to ensure the faithful discharge of the duties of the place, he has always given up one half of his own profits, (whatever they might be,) as a remuneration to them; as also to secure justice being done to the country.—This, then, reduces Mr. Garnier's personal profit to one half of your statement, and with it, the degree of influence and command, which you seem to think are always in proportion to a man's income.—The fact is, Mr. Garnier's patent place, is as much his freehold, as his estate at Wickham; of

neither the one nor the other can he be dispossessed; he is at full liberty to take any political part he pleases, his judgment, not his interest, directing him in his choice.—In fairness to the present government, it should be mentioned, that they have not been indifferent to the interests of the public, and have maturely weighed the propriety of giving Mr. Garnier a compensation for the purchase of his patent, (which he was, and is, ready to relinquish on any fair terms); but after due investigation, it appeared, that the army could not be better, or more reasonably supplied, than under the present arrangement; as the charges made by the apothecary general to the army are less than those of the Apothecaries Company to the Navy.—Mr. Garnier's emoluments depend wholly upon the success attending wholesale purchases, and retail prices: he has often a great profit on some articles; so has every merchant in every branch of trade; and the merchants may with as much propriety, be said to be drains on the public purse, as that Mr. G. is in the receipt of a large income from public taxes.—You will now see, Mr. G. derives no advantage from any support he may give the present government; that he has repeatedly opposed administration; that he does not receive from the taxes £12,000 a year, during the war; that by agreement with his deputies, he divides the profits with them; that though not professionally employed, he is responsible often, to an immense amount, advancing money from his private fortune to discharge the debts of the public; and that he never was an enemy to peace.—On the whole, I am entitled to conclude, that in this case no blame attaches to the administration, no corrupt motives to Mr. Garnier, and no injury in effect to the public.—The above being the first part of my proposed communication, which I have first sent, from being of a personal nature, I postpone the second part, being of general relation only, to the proceedings and report in question, and remain, Sir, your very faithful servant,—Edmund Poulter.

Essex Meeting.

Sir,—I thank you for the handsome manner in which you have introduced my name in your Register of the 22d. inst. I certainly have been active in advising the freeholders to attend the county meeting at Chelmsford on Friday last: but I do not plead guilty to a charge brought against me, at the said meeting, of having canvassed the county for that purpose. My solicitations were confined to the attending the meeting and hearing the arguments for and against the Address. But it so turned out, that neither arguments nor numbers were of any avail. The sheriff thought proper to decide against us, and to give us reason to complain; 1st. That he put the question of adjournment, before several gentlemen who signed the requisition had spoken, though they were very desirous to deliver their opinion; 2d. That he refused to order a shew of hands, but directed those who were for the adjournment to go to the left and those against it to the right; 3d. That he did not put himself in a situation where he could see the numbers, but decided precipitately, before the freeholders could place themselves as he directed; 4th. That he declared the majority to be in favour of the adjournment when it was clearly apparent to impartial observers who were in a situation to see, that the majority was against the adjournment; 5th. That being applied to by several gentlemen to correct his mistake by taking the numbers with more exactness, he hastily ordered his carriage, which had been waiting for him, to drive on. A considerable number of freeholders met and requested the gentlemen who signed the requisition to protest against these proceedings of the sheriff. They have protested, and demanded another meeting, but have met with a refusal: in consequence of which they meet on Tuesday next to consider what further steps they should take on this extraordinary occasion.—I agree with you, Sir, concerning the county of Essex. It has certainly been a nullity in its representation for the last thirty years: and if majorities are to be construed into minorities, it is likely to be also a nullity in exercising its constitutional right of addressing his majesty on the subject of the most ignominious treaty that ever disgraced the page of history.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,—Montague Burgoyne.—*Mark Hall, 31st Oct.* 1808.

Spanish Revolution.

Sir;—I have read with no inconsiderable degree of surprise, your observations upon the Spanish revolution, in the Political Register, of the 13th of August current. From some of your former writings on that remarkable event, I had concluded, that you were zealously interested in the cause of the Spanish patriots; it is therefore with astonishment that I find you deprecating in such strong terms, the favourite object of the Spanish people, to place Ferdinand upon the throne, and declaring your opinion, that should that object succeed, it will do harm to every nation in Europe, and particularly

to this nation. In expressing this opinion, you have not even the merit of consistency; a quality essentially requisite in every journalist, who would preserve his credit with the public, and particularly so, in the author of the Political Register, which has obtained so extensive a circulation, and is known to possess so much influence over the public mind.—When intelligence of the insurrections in Spain first reached this country, you listened to it with an incredulous ear; the news you thought was too good to be true, and that the people of Spain were too deeply sunk in apathy, to rouse at the call of liberty; but when further accounts arrived, which left no room to doubt that the indignation, which the treachery and tyranny of Buonaparte had excited, was general throughout Spain, that in almost every province of the kingdom, the people were flying to arms; vowing to defend their freedom, or perish in the attempt; when we found them talking of their liberties, of reforming abuses, and restoring the Cortes or real representatives of the people, you then formed a more favourable opinion of the success of their cause, and congratulated your countrymen on an event so glorious to the Spanish people, and so auspicious to the liberties of Europe. You concurred in thinking, that the consequences of this event would not be confined to Spain; you hoped that it would be properly improved by the government of this country, and you were of opinion, that it presented the most feasible opportunity of checking the exhorbitant power of France, that had occurred during the last fifteen years; but, at the same time, that you earnestly recommended that every assistance should be given by this country to the Spanish patriots, you gave his majesty's ministers a piece of wholesome advice, the propriety of which was felt and acknowledged by every prudent man in the country. *Do not interfere with the internal affairs of Spain. Send them arms and ammunition, men and money, every succour to enable them to preserve the freedom and independence of their country, but leave the people to choose what form of government may be most agreeable to them.* This seemed to be the line of conduct which ministers had resolved to adopt; and every consideration of prudence, pointed it out as the most proper to be followed. We at that time knew little of the wishes of the Spanish nation, on the subject of their government, or of the opinion which was generally entertained in Spain, of the conduct of their royal family. We seemed to be conscious of the errors which we had formerly fallen into, in waging war only for kings, and we resolved, on the present occasion, not to split on the same rock. Though Britain thus disclaimed all interested views in the assistance which she resolved to give to Spain; yet she was, in fact, wisely following that line of conduct, which was most conducive to her own interest, and the general welfare of Europe. Whatever form of government might be established by the Spanish people, was a matter of no importance to this country, in comparison of preventing Spain from being subjugated by France; and if in that she succeeded, she knew she would procure inestimable advantages, both to herself and to Europe. She knew that she would, thereby, give an effectual check to the inordinate ambition of Buonaparte, the effect of which must be the emancipating of the powers of the Continent from that debasing state of servility and dependence, under which they have so long groaned. These circumstances I mention to shew the wisdom of the advice which you gave, not to intermeddle with the internal affairs of Spain, or to attempt to frustrate, directly or indirectly, any plan of government, that Spain might choose to adopt. Since that time, however, the mass of official intelligence, which we have received from all parts of Spain, leaves us no room to doubt, as to the wishes of the people of that kingdom with regard to their form of government. From Gallicia to Andalusia, from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, the voice of the people is unanimous for Ferdinand VII. That the people, or their leaders, have, in thus choosing Ferdinand, discovered any intention of re-establishing the old government, with all its defects, there is not the least reason to believe; though from the hatred you bear to that unfortunate prince, and to all the family of Bourbon, you cannot help identifying Ferdinand VII. with the ancient government of Spain; excluding the possibility of any modification of the power of the crown, as well as of all reform of abuses, or amelioration in the condition of the people. It is, however, sufficiently apparent, that the wishes of the Spanish nation are in favour of a monarchical government, and that all ranks of people are enthusiastically bent on having Ferdinand for their king. All their edicts and proclamations run in his name; they call him their beloved sovereign, and, in their addresses, the Juntas of the different provinces, who must be well acquainted with the sentiments of the people, call upon them, in the name of their amiable Ferdinand, to die in defence of their country

their religion, and their king. And such addresses their leaders, certainly, never would have published, had they not known that the people were enthusiastically attached to their prince.—Since it thus so evidently appears, that the governments of the different provinces, as well as the people of Spain, have given their voice so unanimously in favour of the prince of Asturias to be their king; upon what principle is it, that you condemn the gentlemen at the City of London Tavern, at the dinner given to the Spanish deputies, for having drank the health of Ferdinand VII? On the promoters of this dinner, you have poured forth a torrent of the most unmerited abuse: for what reason it is not very easy to conjecture; for I cannot conceive, why a dinner, given by the bankers and merchants of the city of London to the Spanish deputies, as a mark of respect for them, and of attachment to their cause, should be more a subject of censure than a dinner given by any corporation, in any part of this country. Of your remarks on this dinner, it is foreign from my object to take any notice, though there is one observation I cannot pass over in silence; talking of the quantity of turtle on the table, you exclaim: "how many hun-"dreds of wretches have worked like galley "slaves, upon bread and water, to supply "this gluttonous repast!" If you mean by this to insinuate, that the expence of this dinner was defrayed from taxes, wrung from the earnings of the poor, you have made a most unjustifiable attempt to mislead the ignorant part of the public. If this is not the meaning of the passage, it can have no meaning at all; for I presume that the tavern-keepers, waiters, cooks, under-cooks, turnspits, &c. employed in cooking and serving up this dinner, were acting in the way of their business, and that they were as much obliged to the gentlemen by whom the expence of this dinner was paid, as the paper-makers, stationers, printers, printers-devils, newsmen, &c. &c. engaged in getting up the Political Register, are indebted to you, for the employment you give them, in printing and publishing that meritorious Journal, by which you and they earn so comfortable a subsistence, and the people of this country derive so much entertainment and instruction. But to return—if the gentlemen at the London Tavern knew what were the sentiments of the deputies, and of the Spanish nation, and if at this dinner, given in honour of them, and as a mark of attachment to their cause, they had omitted to toast king Ferdinand VII, they would have been guilty of a piece of rudeness to their guests, totally unbecoming the character of Englishmen,—a piece of rudeness which could have been equally foreign from sound policy, as contrary to every rule of civility and politeness. They would have been, thereby, taking upon themselves, to express their disapprobation of the conduct of the Spanish nation, and to interfere with the internal affairs of that people, which you must admit, would have been high presumption in a set of gentlemen assembled in their private capacities. They would also have been setting at defiance, the wholesome advice which you gave to the government and people of this country, not to interfere with the Spanish people, in the choice of their government. This advice, which you were so anxious to impress upon others, you yourself have lost sight of, as if you had been the only person in the nation, on whom there was no obligation to follow it. If the Spanish patriots, instead of declaring for Ferdinand, had resolved to establish a republican form of government; if the British ministry, taking alarm at this step, had remonstrated against it, and threatened to withdraw their succours, and to leave Spain to contend alone with Buonaparte; in what terms of severity and reproach, would you have deprecated their conduct? You would have told them, that, by such an unjustifiable interference, they were sacrificing the best interests of the country, and throwing away the most favourable opportunity that had ever been presented to them, of resisting with effect, the exorbitant power of France. But, impolitic as such conduct would have been, it is the very thing which you, by the means of your Journal, are now endeavouring to effect. By the opinion you have expressed of the choice of Ferdinand VII, and by the arguments with which that opinion is attempted to be supported, you have done what lies in your power to thwart the cause of Spain, and to assist the tyrannical attempts of Napoleon. I do not, however, dread, that the publishing of your sentiments will be attended with so alarming consequences; it will only prove your own inconsistency, and how little regard you can pay to your own advices and opinions. Your Journal will not in all probability reach Spain; and there is no great risk that any thinking people in this country will be misled by your arguments. But, in so far as your power goes, you have attempted to raise a jealousy of this country, in the breasts of the Spanish leaders; you have attempted to render the people of England lukewarm to their cause; you have attempted to mislead the people of

England, by making them believe, that they are to be taxed for carrying on a war in Spain, for a purpose which, if it succeed, must be productive of harm to this nation, and to every nation in Europe. It is for you, Mr. Cobbett, to reconcile such conduct with sound policy, and with your former opinions on the subject of the Spanish revolution.—But, if the question were whether the Spaniards had acted prudently in choosing Ferdinand for their king, it would be no difficult matter, not only to prove the affirmative, but to demonstrate, that it was the only possible measure, which could enable them effectually to resist the power of France. When the juntas of the provinces were called to arms, a people so circumstanced as the people of Spain then were,—suddenly deprived of their king and government,—it was necessary, in order to insure unanimity, to shew to them not only what they were to fight against, but what they were to fight for. To defend the liberties of their country, against the base attempts of a treacherous and perfidious tyrant, was no doubt a cause sufficient of itself, to rouse to arms, a people so brave and so gallant as the Spaniards. But to render the rising of the people general; to secure unanimity, and prevent the growth of faction, it was necessary that an ultimate object should be pointed out to them,—that the people should know the hand destined to sway the sceptre, when their exertions had freed the country from its foreign enemies;—and to whom could they so naturally cast their eyes, as to Ferdinand, to whom the people were so unanimously, and so enthusiastically attached? Let it be supposed that the Spanish leaders, illuminated by the same enlightened policy which distinguishes you, Sir, had declared that the royal family had forfeited all right to the crown, and had merely called upon the people to take up arms to repel the invaders of the country; promising when that should be accomplished, to call a national assembly of the people, to choose a constitution, and frame a government for themselves; what, in all probability, would have been the result of so imprudent a step, what, but disunion, ruin, and defeat? The people no doubt would have armed; but one party would have declared for Ferdinand; another for king Charles, and a third for the proposers of the Convention; and from parties influenced by so different views, and actuated by principles so hostile to each other, could any union in council, or cooperation in action, been expected? Would they have joined, with one consent, to repel the foreign invaders, when they must have known, that whenever that end was effected, they would have to wage a civil war among themselves, for the settlement of the government? Such a measure would have given rise to a fourth faction in the nation, and that too in favour of Joseph Buonaparte. Prudent people, and such as had estates and property in the country, dreading the anarchy and confusion, which must necessarily ensue on a total dissolution of the government;—calling to mind the awful scenes that have been acted in France, under the government of a Convention; and unwilling to run the risk of bringing similar distress and misery on their country, would have quietly submitted to the usurpation of Buonaparte; and to the happiness of the people, sacrificed their liberties and independence. These evils have all been prevented by adhering to Ferdinand; and in so doing, the Spaniards have followed the prudent example of England in the year 1688. When James the VIIth abdicated the throne, and carried his son along with him, England did not make choice of a new family, but conferred the crown upon the daughters of their late king, and on their demise without issue, the parliament settled it on the nearest protestant heirs.—You say that to restore the house of Bourbon to the throne of Spain, without any limitations whatever, will do harm to every nation in Europe, and particularly to this nation. But surely you do not mean to say, that it will be productive of equal harm to this country, as the establishment of Joseph Buonaparte on the throne of Spain? We had, therefore, but to choose between these two evils; prudence would surely dictate to us to choose the least. The consequences of the latter to this country, you have so well described in the 4th No. of the present volume of the Political Register, that I cannot do better than give the passage in your words: "Napoleon once in "secure possession of Spain, would easily "keep us in a state of continual alarm: "all hopes of resistance would be extin-"guished upon the continent of Europe, "which, united under one head, would, "and must, harrass us in a way that we "could not support, for any number of "years." If this, Sir, be your real opinion of the fatal consequences that must ensue to this country from the subjugation of Spain, let us hear no more of the harm to every nation in Europe, and to this nation in particular, which the restoration of the ancient government of Spain must occasion,—refrain from declaiming on the

folly and absurdity of England, spending her blood and treasure, to carry on a war in Spain for the restoration of the Bourbons ;—and try not to damp the ardour of the people of England, in behalf of the Spanish patriots, when our assistance is of so great importance to them, in the glorious cause for which they have taken up arms, and when the consequences of their want of success must be so fatal to England. —I do not believe, nor do you believe, if we can judge from what you have formerly written on the subject, that the ancient government with all its defects will be restored by the enthronement of Ferdinand the VIIth. But even if it should, if Spain succeeds in driving out the French, the advantages to this country, political as well as commercial, will be very great. The influence which France has so long retained over the government of Spain will be destroyed, and Spain will be thrown into the arms of England. The family compact, which had existed so long to the disadvantage of England as well as of Spain, was annihilated by the expulsion of the Bourbons from France. It is true, that the influence of France still continued to operate, even down to the day that Ferdinand arrived at Bayonne, but that was occasioned by the terror, with which the power of France inspired a weak and cowardly government. But if Spain succeed in defeating the attempts of Napoleon, and securing her independence, the dread of the power of France will no longer operate on the Spanish government ; Spain will have become conscious of her own strength, and will no longer submit to be the tool of France, or sacrifice her dearest interests to the views and caprices of Buonaparte. Gratitude to England, and hatred of France, which the present perfidious attempts of the latter must inspire, will naturally occasion a close connexion betwixt Spain and England. It is well known that there is a great similarity of character between the two nations ; and that the people of Spain have always been remarked for a strong predilection in favour of England. The peculiar wants of each other, and their mutual ability to supply those wants, would promote a commercial intercourse equally beneficial to both nations. Such an intercourse has been long earnestly wished for in Spain, as appears by their well known adage : "Con todo el mundo guerra, y paz con Ynglatterra "—"Peace with England, and war with all the world ?" and to establish such an intercourse will be the object of the government, as well as the wish of the people of Spain.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obliged humble servant,—SEMPRONIUS.—*Forth-Bank, 24th of August,* 1808.

N. B.—This letter has been mislaid, or it should have appeared long ago.—W. C.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

HOLLAND. — *Dutch Commercial Decree, dated 18th October,* 1808. (Concluded from page 800.)

They are further authorised to correspond direct with ourselves, in such cases where they have any information of great importance to communicate to us, and particularly to acquaint us with any instances of neglect or backwardness on the part of the civil or military agents. The naval and military force shall also be at their disposal, in all that relates to the watching of the coasts and ports. The telegraphs are likewise placed immediately under their orders.—Art. IV. Fishing-boats shall be compelled to return to the havens from which they sailed. They shall, upon no consideration, be admitted elsewhere, not even under the pretext of having suffered damage ; and wherever any trace shall be discovered of a communication having taken place with the enemy, such as persons being found on board, not belonging to the crew, or the smallest package of merchandize, letters, or newspapers, the boat shall become the property of the civil or military authorities who shall have contributed to her seizure, as soon as a decree of seizure is pronounced by the judges, which shall be within 14 days at the farthest.—Art. V. All nations or foreign merchantmen entering any of our havens or roads of any description shall be warned by a boat to keep off, and that if they do not they will be fired at. No excuses can be admitted, letters received or any intercourse entered into with them. Ships of war and those of friendly nations, are alone excepted.—Art. VI. All decrees, regulations, and other dispositions, heretofore adopted, relative to the shutting of the havens, and the prevention of communication with the enemy, shall remain in full force.—Art. VII. Our members of finance, marine, colonies, justice, and police, are each in his respective department, charged with the execution of the present decree.—Given at our Palace at Utrecht, 18th October, 1808, in the third year of our reign. —(Signed) LODEWYK.

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